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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 CONAKRY 000252

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PMIL](#) [ASEC](#) [KDEM](#) [GV](#)
SUBJECT: EMBASSY CONAKRY - SITUATION REPORT 13

REF: A. CONAKRY 0223-0228

[1](#)B. CONAKRY 0231-0233

[1](#)C. CONAKRY 0236-0247

Classified By: POL/ECON CHIEF SHANNON CAZEAU FOR REASON 1.4 B AND D

[1](#)1. (C) As of 14:00, Conakry remains quiet and calm. Embassy has received no reports of gunfire or criminal activity. Local businesses and gas stations remain closed. There is very little traffic on the roads. Earlier this morning, between 150 and 250 women were peacefully demonstrating in front of the People's Palace, which is located just before the Castro Bridge leading to downtown. The women were chanting in support of President Conte and later started marching towards the Presidential Palace, calling out "Long Live President Conte." The British Ambassador, who lives downtown, told Ambassador Carter that soldiers are still in the streets. He said that they are looking "lethargic" and may be getting bored.

[1](#)2. (C) Sources reported that the mutineers sent a courier to the Ministry of Defense around 11:30 who notified the GoG of an additional demand. They are now reportedly calling for "a complete change of government." When source was asked whether they were referring to the president or the prime minister, he said again "a complete change of government." No meetings have taken place today between the mutineers and the GoG, reportedly because they cannot agree on a neutral meeting place. President Conte was reportedly at the Ministry of Defense when the courier made his delivery, but was planning to either go to the presidential palace or return to Camp Samory Toure.

[1](#)3. (C) RSO and DAO toured the main access routes to Camp Alpha Yaya and saw no evidence of any military buildup.

[1](#)4. (C) The Project Manager for the Embassy's Local Guard Program said that two of his other clients, Cellcom and Orange (both telecommunications) are trying to facilitate the departure of visiting management officials. A representative of the mining company BHP Billiton told the Ambassador that he was also assisting visitors with departure arrangements.

[1](#)5. (C) The main question for those within the diplomatic community relates to who is in charge, both within the mutiny and the GoG. The Senegalese Ambassador asked Ambassador Carter "who's the boss?" The ECOWAS Ambassador posed the same question, as have several other Ambassadors and diplomats.

[1](#)6. (C) The Russian Ambassador told Ambassador Carter that Conte's side will eventually win because the mutineers do not seem to have any external support. He added, however, that he does not know how long the stand-off will last, but that when it is over, the mutiny will likely have serious repercussions politically, socially, and militarily. The

ECOWAS Ambassador said that the population is essentially indifferent towards the mutineers and that the only area where their interests may converge is in the desire to get rid of the "old guard" bureaucrats.

¶17. (C) Ambassador Carter also spoke to Guinea's Foreign Minister (FM) who said that the situation is "sad, but not fully a surprise." When asked who is in charge of the negotiations, the Minister seemed confused, but then said he thinks the prime minister is in charge. He expressed his concern that if the mutiny persists, Guinea could be faced with a rebel military faction. (COMMENT. The FM was working from home and appeared to be almost completely out of touch as far as the GoG's reaction to the situation. END COMMENT).

¶18. (SBU) Reports from three contacts in Kindia, which is located about two hours north of Conakry, indicate that there was a shooting in the town last night that left at least one person dead. A gendarme of officer rank told RSO LES that a sous-lieutenant died after being struck by a bullet fired by local soldiers sympathetic to the Conakry mutineers. He said that the soldiers had also burned the car of the military camp's financial administrator. A member of the Kindia Governor's staff told Econ LES that the dead soldier was the camp "watchman," and that nine other people were wounded. A local union representative told Econ LES that he heard shooting all night. The situation has reportedly been calm since this morning.

¶19. (SBU) The Peace Corps doctor said that a young man, aged 22 or 23, had been shot dead in his neighborhood by uniformed security forces a few days ago. The doctor said that he did not personally witness the incident, but knew the young man

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well, and had talked to neighbors about it. He said that the soldiers robbed the young man and then shot him even though he did not protest the robbery. The Peace Corps Nurse said that her sister-in-law had been injured by a falling bullet and when she took her to the hospital, they found four or five other civilians who had also been wounded by falling bullets. Two of the wounded individuals said they were in their houses when they were struck by the bullets.

¶10. (SBU) The National Council for Civil Society Organizations is releasing a public declaration today condemning the mutineers. The Council calls the mutiny "an attack on the rule of law and fundamental liberties." It demands that the mutineers end the mutiny immediately, and "firmly condemns any act of violence against citizens."

RUMORS?

¶11. (SBU) There has been rumor of a possible peaceful demonstration later this afternoon, to be organized by elements of civil society, reportedly to protest the mutiny. One contact said that the demonstrators would march across the Castro Bridge towards the Presidential Palace after Friday prayers. However, several other Pol/Econ contacts representing civil society and youth organizations told Pol LES that they were not aware of any planned demonstration. A union member told Pol LES that an announcement had been made on local radio calling people to demonstrate, but that no one had any transportation to the downtown area, so no one went.

¶12. (SBU) The national news network Radio Television Guinean (RTG) announced that all of the soldiers had returned to their barracks in order to receive their regularly scheduled 1 million GNF monthly payment (\$220), which is normally paid out on the last working day of the month. Embassy has not yet confirmed whether or not this is actually happening.

COMMENT

¶13. (C) The situation appears to be calmer today than it has over the past few days. This may be related to a number of different factors, including the continued scarcity of fuel, the arrival of the Army Rangers, and the fact that today is a prayer day. However, the GoG and the mutineers do not yet appear to have come to an agreement, and the mutineers may now be demanding an undefined change of government. The GoG does not yet have the situation under control. Furthermore, it is not clear who is negotiating on behalf of the GoG, nor what kind of support the negotiator is getting, and from whom.

¶14. (C) Civilians may be getting less tolerant of the current situation. As the fuel problem persists, citizens are likely to get increasingly frustrated as they are unable to go about their daily business. The steadily rising cost of living coupled with the general poverty level and lack of refrigeration means that most Guineans do not keep more than a day or two's worth of food at home. Availability of fuel is critical both to bringing food into the capital, and for people being able to get out and buy what they need. END
COMMENT.
CARTER